Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) Vecinos Volunteer Program
Frequently Asked Questions
(Updated March 31, 2014)

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE LANL VECINOS VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

What is the LANL Vecinos Volunteer Program?
The LANL Vecinos Volunteer Program connects great employee and retiree volunteers with local nonprofit organizations needing assistance.

What does the word '*Vecinos'* mean?
Vecinos, the name of the LANL Volunteer Program, means "*neighbors*" in Spanish. Our employee and retiree volunteers give their time and talent to our neighbors to help provide resources and assistance throughout northern New Mexico and beyond.

How many LANL employees and retirees participate in the LANL Vecinos Volunteer Program?
As of 2014, more than 3,000 LANL employee and retirees have created accounts in VolunteerMatch and are keeping track of their volunteer hours.

How can I get involved in the LANL Vecinos Volunteer Program?
- You can get involved by creating an account in VolunteerMatch at: http://lanl.volunteermatch.org/
- You can send an email to volunteermatch@lanl.gov to receive weekly notifications of upcoming education and community volunteer opportunities

Where can I find out about upcoming volunteer opportunities in the community?
Volunteer wanting to receive weekly email notifications about volunteer opportunities can sign up by emailing volunteermatch@lanl.gov or contacting Debbi Wersonick at sonic@lanl.gov .

Can LANL subcontractors get involved?
LANL subcontractors are welcome to join the LANL Vecinos Volunteer Program, but there are limitations in the benefits provided by Los Alamos National Security, LLC (LANS).

Can LANL retirees get involved?
We encourage our LANL retirees to get involved in the LANL Vecinos Volunteer Program in one of two ways:
- Create an account on VolunteerMatch and track your own hours
- Contact the Los Alamos Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) at the Betty Ehart Senior Center at 662-8923.

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What is the Retired Senior Volunteer Program?
The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) provides opportunities for people 55 and over to make a difference in their community through volunteer service. RSVP volunteers contribute anywhere from a few to many hours a week, serving in the schools, the hospital, Senior Centers, at the Quarterly Blood Drives in leisure and recreational groups and other nonprofit and public organizations to help meet community needs. Los Alamos RSVP offers a wide variety of choice to its volunteers with over 60 volunteer placement sites. RSVP matches the personal interests and skills of older Americans with opportunities to volunteer and offers supplemental insurance while on duty, pre-service orientation, and on-the-job training from the agency or organization where volunteers are placed.

Why does LANS encourage LANL employees and retirees to log their volunteer hours?
In 2007, LANS initiated an incentive for their employees and retirees to track their service hours through VolunteerMatch or RSVP in order to be recognized as outstanding volunteers for m*aking the difference* in their communities. Employees and retirees, who register and track their volunteer service hours, are invited to an annual recognition event and presented with an appreciation gift. Additionally, monetary awards will be given to the nonprofit organization on behalf of the outstanding LANL volunteer who supports it.

How do I get included in the annual LANL Vecinos Volunteer Program Recognition Program and receive a monetary award for my nonprofit organization?
Los Alamos National Security, LLC, and LANL's Community Programs Office will be hosting the Annual LANL Vecinos Volunteer Program Recognition Event in June 2014. All employee volunteers who register their hours in VolunteerMatch (retirees can register with RSVP) will receive a certificate and an appreciation gift. If volunteers log more than 100 hours, they will also be eligible for a monetary award to be given to the nonprofit they support.

How are the monetary awards levels decided?
Awards will be determined based on the following criteria:

0 – 99 hours	Appreciation certificate
100 – 249 hours	$100 donated to a qualifying 501(c)(3) on volunteer's behalf
250 – 499 hours	$250 donated to a qualifying 501(c)(3) on volunteer's behalf
500 – above hours	$500 donated to a qualifying 501(c)(3) on volunteer's behalf

Is it too late to log my hours and receive a monetary award for my nonprofit organization?
Volunteers have until April 4, 2014, to log their **calendar year 2013** volunteer hours to receive invitation to the Annual LANL Vecinos Volunteer Program Recognition Program and be eligible for a monetary award.

How do I log my hours?
LANL employees can log their hours in VolunteerMatch, using the website or the new MobileMatch smartphone app and retirees can contact RSVP.

WHAT IS VOLUNTEERMATCH /
 USING THE VOLUNTEERMATCH SYSTEM – EMPLOYEES AND NONPROFITS

Since 2007, LANS has contracted services from VolunteerMatch to make it easy for LANL employees and retirees to find existing volunteer opportunities in the community and log their volunteer hours.

What is VolunteerMatch?
VolunteerMatch is a national nonprofit organization that strengthens communities by making it easier for good people and good causes to connect. Its award-winning online service, http://www.volunteermatch.org/ , helps visitors find local volunteer opportunities by location, interest area, and/or keyword. It currently lists more than 80,000 volunteer opportunities across the country.

Who can use the national VolunteerMatch website to find volunteer opportunities?
Anyone using a computer with internet capability can access local and national volunteer opportunities through VolunteerMatch's main web site at
http://www.volunteermatch.org/ .

How can LANL employee and retiree volunteers use VolunteerMatch?
In 2007, LANS entered a partnership with VolunteerMatch and created a **dedicated portal** for our employees and retirees. Lab employees and retirees can create an account, search for opportunities, and log their hours at http://lanl.volunteermatch.org/ .

NEW in 2014, LANL employees and retirees can also log their hours using the MoblileMatch smartphone app!

REGISTERING & REPORTING HOURS

How do I set up an account on the LANL VolunteerMatch online site or MobileMatch smartphone app?
- To set up an account on VolunteerMatch, the volunteer must have access to the internet, have a smartphone or tablet, and an active e-mail account.
- Go to: http://lanl.vounteermatch.org
- In the middle of the page is LOGIN or REGISTER
- Click on REGISTER NOW
- The registration process is straightforward and guides you through each step
- Once submitted to VolunteerMatch for processing, you will receive a confirmation e-mail at the address you provided during the registration process

- Follow the steps in the e-mail and activate your new VolunteerMatch account
- Start logging your hours and search for new volunteer opportunities!

How do I log my volunteer hours on VolunteerMatch?
- Go to: http://lanl.vounteermatch.org using your computer or smartphone
- In the middle of the page of the VolunteerMatch site is LOGIN
- Click on LOGIN
- Enter your e-mail/username and password
- WELCOME page. TRACK YOUR VOLUNTEER HOURS. Click on GO
- To add a new volunteer activity and organization name, click ADD VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY **or**
- To add hours to an existing volunteer opportunity or organization, click on ADD/EDIT HOURS in your list organizations
- ADD HOURS TO ANOTHER DATE will allow you to add new volunteer hours
- Be sure and hit SAVE before exiting the page or your work will be lost
- **If you experience problems logging hours, contact the Community Programs Office at (505) 665-4400 or through e-mail at** volunteermatch@lanl.gov .

How often should I log my volunteer hours? Do I really have to log my hours for each day I volunteer?
Ideally, as you perform service hours you should try and log them. Although the VolunteerMatch system encourages volunteers to log their hours for each day they volunteer, we realize that task can be time consuming. It is perfectly legitimate to batch your hours into blocks of time. For example, if you volunteer 20 hours a month spanning over several days, consider selecting a couple of days within that month and enter 10 hours on each day. Keep in mind, there are only 24 hours in a day – so you will have spread your hours over an appropriate period of time in the system.

Can I log hours with a nonprofit if it's not listed with VolunteerMatch?
Yes. You can log hours for any nonprofit/tax exempt organization for which you volunteer. You just need to fill in the organizational field the first time you log hours with them. Once added, an organization stays on your list until you remove it.

How should I fill in the "Opportunity Name" field when I log a volunteer opportunity for the first time?
The "Opportunity name" field describes the activity that you did for that particular organization. If you are primarily involved in fundraising, you might want to describe it that way. If you help with mailings, you might want to describe the activity as "Administrative Support." The field does not restrict how you can fill it out.

Who approves volunteer hours?
Volunteer hours are reviewed and "approved" by a Community Programs Office
VolunteerMatch website administrator.

**I am having difficulty tracking and adding new volunteer hours in VolunteerMatch.
Every time I start the process I get an "error" message. Is the system broken or am I
doing something wrong?**
VolunteerMatch suggests the following steps to correct the problem:

- Try deleting your cache (temporary internet files on Internet Explorer) and
  "cookies."   HTTP cookies (also referred to as tracking cookies, or simply cookies)
  are small pieces of text, stored on a user's computer by a web browser; and they
  contain the user's settings, shopping cart contents, or other data used by websites.
- Then go to the VolunteerMatch site at http://lanl.vounteermatch.org and log in
  again.
- If you continue to experience difficulty, please e-mail VolunteerMatch at
  lanl_support@volunteermatch.org or call 415-241-6872. Customer representatives
  are available between 9 am and 6 pm Pacific Time, Monday through Friday.
- Or, you can contact the LANL Community Programs Office at 665-4400.

**REGISTERING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES – INFORMATION FOR NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATIONS USING VOLUNTEERMATCH**

**How do nonprofits register their organizations on VolunteerMatch? And, is there a
fee for nonprofits to use VolunteerMatch?**
Registration is available for all nonprofit organizations, government entities, and
educational institutions to recruit volunteers and get the word out about their
organization, its mission, and resources available in the community. There is no charge for
nonprofits to register and use VolunteerMatch.
- Visit VolunteerMatch at: http://www.volunteermatch.org/nonprofits/ .
- Click on REGISTER NOW
- Create your personal profile
- Add your organization
- Add your opportunities
- Select a service level
- Verify your e-mail address
- VolunteerMatch will review and approve your account within 24 business hours
- Begin recruiting more volunteers!

Who decides which organizations can register with VolunteerMatch?
VolunteerMatch has a process it uses to determine which organizations can post volunteer opportunities to its Website. In most cases, registering organizations will need to provide evidence of their tax-exempt or nonprofit status. However, VolunteerMatch may wave that proof under circumstances such as a for-profit organization with a civic mission. VolunteerMatch can provide additional guidance on its criteria for nonprofit registration.

If I register with the VolunteerMatch site, will I have nonprofit organizations approach me for resources?
There are only two instances under which a nonprofit organization will contact you through VolunteerMatch.
1. You indicate that you want to volunteer for an organization by hitting the "I want to help" button on a particular organization's information pages.
2. You post a volunteer resume that indicates that you wish to be recruited as a volunteer.

OTHER IMPORTANT QUESTIONS ABOUT THE LANL VECINOS VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

LANL SUB-CONTRACTORS AND LANL EMPLOYEE FAMILY MEMBERS

Can LANL sub-contractors and LANL employee family members create an account on the LANL VolunteerMatch site?
Yes, LANL sub-contractors and family members are welcome to register on VolunteerMatch and track their hours along with LANS employees and retirees.

Are LANL sub-contractors and LANL employee family members eligible to receive recognition awards?
LANS/LANL sub-contractors or LANL employee family members are **not** eligible to receive these awards. The business reason for this decision is that sub-contractors are not employees of Los Alamos National Security, LLC, and treating them as such creates what (in legal terms) is called "co-employment issues." There are additional IRS restrictions that LANS must meet to be in compliance with making "gifts" to nonprofits.

Then why should sub-contractors log their hours in the LANL VolunteerMatch website?
We are looking into the possibility of notifying the sub-contracting companies regarding their outstanding employees and encouraging them to institute a volunteer recognition program.

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What about employees who are working elsewhere or are on a change of station?
VolunteerMatch is available worldwide to employees, contactors, and retirees who wish to log their volunteer hours at http://lanl.volunteermatch.org/ and nationally for those seeking to both volunteer and log hours in the United States.

VOLUNTEERISM OR IS IT COMMUNITY SERVICE?
LANS employees are also eligible for paid leave time to participate in educational activities involving science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

SCIENCE EDUCATION COMMUNITY SERVICE TIME

LANS employees may be eligible for paid leave through the Science Education Community Service Time System.

What is Science Education Community Service?
The Laboratory promotes LANS/LANS employee participation in science, math, engineering and math (STEM) educational activities as a good corporate citizen and valuable community resource. Science Education Community Service Time is time off with pay that might be granted to LANS/LANL full-time or part-time employees, at the discretion of their supervisor and with the approval of the LANL Community Programs Office. Please review the LANL Community Programs Office Science Education Community Service Time website prior to submitting a request for Science Education Community Service Time at http://cao.lanl.gov/MRcgi/MRlogin.pl?PROJECTID=103 .

How much time are LANS employees allowed to take off for Science Education Community Service Time?
Employees participating in Laboratory-approved science education activities during work hours are permitted up to 32 hours per fiscal year of Science Education Community Service Time.

What qualifies as Science Education Community Service Time?
There are several science education activities that LANS/LANL employees can participate in with prior approval as described above. For Science Education Community Service to be certified as educational in nature, the activity must meet the following criteria:
• Provide science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education activities;
• Be uncompensated;
• Be provided to a non-profit educational group or organization;
• Be part of an organized program if it is a mentoring or tutoring activity (please note that an employee may not mentor or tutor his/her own child unless the child is part of a larger group); or
• Have a secular purpose (i.e., a non-religious purpose, even if that activity takes place at a religious school).

Examples of eligible activities
Examples of activities that qualify for Science Education Community Service Time include:
• Judging science fairs
• Judging/helping with other types of STEM competitions (e.g., math contests)
• Participating in a STEM-related career fair at an educational institution
• Giving STEM-related field trips for instructional or technical purposes (not as an escort or chaperone) or giving STEM-related talks and demonstrations in classrooms and at schools
• Tutoring or mentoring as part of an organized program
• Scouting badges (only if scouting is STEM related, and not as the scouting official)

Who can I contact if I have questions about Science Education Community Service Time?
Contact Janelle Vigil-Maestas, Community Programs Office at 665-4400 or by email at vigil-m@lanl.gov.

If you could not find the answer to your question(s), please contact the Community Programs Office at (505) 665-4400 or through volunteermatch@lanl.gov.